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Ex-Policeman's Testimony Poses . . .

Startling New Questions About the Death of Martin Luther King

An ex-police detective assigned to guard Martin Luther King says he was pulled off the security detail only hours before King was murdered and ordered to stay home for three days because a "hit man" was gunning for him.

Ed Redditt, former detective with the Memphis police force, also revealed that when police officials learned of death threats against Dr. King, instead of beefing up security they incredibly slashed it from 10 men to two.

Even more unbelievably, when King was assassinated by a sniper's slug on April 4, 1968, both policemen assigned to guard him were not at the scene, said Redditt.

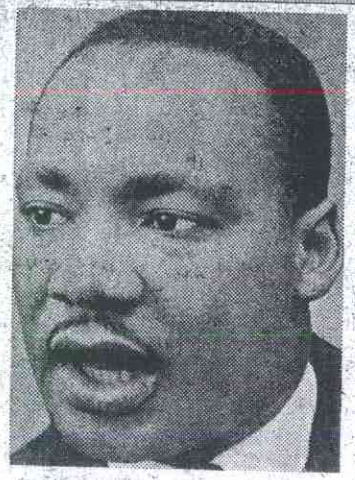
"When Dr. King was murdered I was miles away — and the only other officer on the detail with me that day (W.B. Richmond) was missing from the scene.

"Makes you wonder, doesn't it?" Redditt said.

Redditt said hours before King was slain he was called to the office of Frank Holloman, then director of the Memphis police and fire departments, and introduced to a man identified by Holloman as a "Secret Service agent."

The man told Redditt he had information that a "hit man" from St. Louis had been given a "contract" to kill Redditt.

"The whole thing just didn't make sense," Redditt said. "What the hell did the Secret Service care about a black police officer? They're supposed to protect the President and Vice-President, not cops . . ."



VICTIM: Neither of Martin Luther King's police guards was at scene when he was killed by sniper.

Despite his protests to Holloman that he had a job to do, protecting Dr. King, Redditt was ordered to go home — and Holloman called in two burly police officers to escort him there and stand guard over him.

"It was as if the guards were trying to keep me in the house, rather than protect me," Redditt remembered.

That evening, at 6:01 p.m., as Dr. King stood chatting on the outdoor balcony of his second-floor motel room with his associates, a single rifle bullet snuffed out his life.

Three days after the killing, Redditt was released from protective custody.

"Not another word was said about a killer looking for me," he told The ENQUIRER. "The whole thing was dropped, like it never happened."

Patrolman Richmond, who is also black, has stated publicly that he wasn't on the scene when Dr. King was gunned down. He refused to discuss the situation with The ENQUIRER.

Former Police Chief Holloman was also reluctant to discuss the strange circumstances surrounding Dr. King's assassination, but he said: "I can assure you the death threat against Detective Redditt was very real."

However, a Secret Service spokesman, Jack Warner, denied any Secret Service agent had warned Redditt of a death threat against him.

Ed Redditt

Frank Holloman

"That's absolutely bizarre!" he said, adding, "and definitely untrue."

Richard Feeney, assistant to the chief counsel of the House Select Committee on Assassinations, which is reopening the probe into Dr. King's assassination, told The ENQUIRER that Memphis police records confirm Redditt's story. He said neither Redditt nor Richmond was on the scene when Dr. King was slain, and that Redditt had been ordered to go to his home shortly before the murder, and was kept there under guard three days.

Redditt explained that he never told his story before because "officials had already made up their minds that James Earl Ray was the lone gunman — that there was no conspiracy to kill Dr. King. Once that decision was made, my story was totally irrelevant."

— JOHN BLACKBURN